TITLE OF THE INVENTION

Medal Mounting Device

APPLICANT

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CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This is a divisional of patent application number 09/981,405 filed on Oct. 17, 2001.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention:

This invention relates generally to devices for mounting medals on a uniform.

2. Prior Art:

A military medal is typically comprised of a loop of ribbon, a medallion suspended at a lower end of the ribbon, and an attaching device at the top of the ribbon for attaching to a uniform. Each branch of the military service has specific regulations for the wearing of medals. For example, there are rules that limit number of medals which may be mounted side-by-side on a single row without overlap, the number of medals which may be mounted side-by-side on a single row with overlap, the amount of permissible overlap within a row, the length of the medal from the top of the ribbon to the bottom of the medallion, etc.

Conventional medals are constructed for being attached to a uniform individually. Therefore, they are very difficult to line up properly. If they must be attached onto another uniform, the tedious mounting process must be repeated. Further, the attaching devices prevent them from overlapping. A highly decorated service member can run out of room on the uniform if the medals cannot be overlapped. Service members thus usually pay a medal mounting service or tailor shop to remove the original attaching devices, reconnect the ends of the loop ribbons which come apart after the attaching devices are removed, and attach the medals on a backing with pins, with overlap if necessary. The medals must be remounted every time a new medal is added to the same row.

U.S. patent 5,782,022 to Tubberville shows a medal mounting device for aligning a plurality of medals along a row and attaching them simultaneously to a uniform. It is comprised of an elongated bar with a channel on the back, and an elongated strip which snaps into the channel. The upper end of a medal ribbon is clamped between the channel and the strip. The ribbon is wrapped around the top of the bar and hung down the front. However, the ribbon shown is a single ply ribbon, not a loop as in a conventional ribbon. A medallion cannot be hung on a single ply ribbon. The mounting bar cannot be used with a conventional loop ribbon, which is not long enough to be clamped inside the bar, wrapped around the top of the bar, and hung down the front of the bar. A specially made ribbon is required.

OBJECTIVES OF THE INVENTION

The objectives of the present medal mounting device are:
to attach a single medal or a row of medals to a uniform;
to support the row of medals in perfect alignment;
to support the row of medals in either laterally abutting or overlapping positions;
to prevent the medals from shifting relative to each other; and
to easily attach the medals to a uniform.

Further objectives of the present invention will become apparent from a consideration of the drawings and ensuing description.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A medal mounting device is comprised of an elongated support bar with first and second recurved ends. First and second pins are respectively attached to the recurved ends. Spring clips are detachably attached to the pins. A first end of a springy, forwardly bowed clamping bar is hinged to the first recurved end and positioned behind the support bar. To use, the support bar is positioned through the looped ribbons of a plurality of medals. The clamping bar is pressed against the back of the ribbons, and its free second end tucked under the second recurved end of the support bar to clamp the ribbons in position. In another embodiment, the clamping bar is separate from the support bar. In yet another embodiment, the mounting device is comprised of a T-shaped pin inserted through the ribbon of a medal.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWING

Fig. 1 is a rear perspective view of the present medal mounting device in an open position.

Fig. 2 is a top view of the device of Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 is a rear perspective view of the device of Fig. 1 in a closed position.

Fig. 4 is a top view of the device of Fig. 3.

Fig. 5 is a front perspective view of the medal mounting device of Fig. 1 supporting medals in laterally abutting positions.

Fig. 6 is a rear perspective view of the device of Fig. 5.

Fig. 7 is a rear perspective view of the medal mounting device of Fig. 1 supporting medals in overlapping positions.

Fig. 8 is a rear perspective view of a second embodiment of the medal mounting device.

Fig. 9 is a rear perspective view of a third embodiment of the medal mounting device.

Fig. 10 is a rear perspective view of a fourth embodiment of the medal mounting device.

Fig. 11 is a rear perspective view of a fifth embodiment of the medal mounting device.

Fig. 12 is a rear view of a sixth embodiment of the medal mounting device.

Fig. 13 is a rear view of the device of Fig. 12 in a wearing position.

Fig. 14 is a rear view of a seventh embodiment of the medal mounting device.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Figs. 1-4:

A first embodiment of the present medal mounting device is shown in a rear perspective view in Fig. 1 and a top view in Fig. 2. It is comprised of an elongated support bar 10 with backwardly recurved first and second ends 11 and 12 that wrap around the back of support bar 10. First and second pins 13 and 14 are respectively attached to recurved ends 11 and 12 and extend rearward. First and second spring clips 15 and 16 are detachably attached to pins 13 and 14. First and second pins 13 and 14 are preferably attached by being positioned through recurved ends 11 and 12, and prevented from falling out by first and second enlarged heads 17 and 18 at their inner ends. Second enlarged head 18 of second pin 14 is secured against an interior surface of second

recurved end 12 by a forwardly recurved second tab 19 attached to recurved second end 12 and pressed against head 18. A first end 20 of a springy, forwardly bowed clamping bar 21 is hinged to recurved first end 11 of support bar 10. A free second end 22 of clamping bar 21 is shown pivoted upwardly away from support bar 10. First pin 13 is also positioned through a backwardly recurved first tab 23 at first recurved end 11 of clamping bar 10 and serves as a pivot for clamping bar 21. Enlarged heads 17 and 18 of pins 13 and 14 are covered by clamping bar 21 and recurved second tab 19 and prevented from snagging on medal ribbons. Alternatively, recurved tabs 19 and 23 may be eliminated without allowing pins 13 and 14 to fall out. Pins 13 and 14 may also be attached to the rear surfaces of recurved ends 11 and 12 in other ways, such as by welding.

Clamping bar 21 is shown in Figs. 3 and 4 pressed against a rear surface of support bar 10, and free second end 22 tucked under recurved second end 12 of support bar 10. Since clamping bar 21 is forwardly bowed when relaxed, tucking second end 22 under recurved second end 12 of support bar 10 presses clamping bar 21 firmly against a back of support bar 10. Detachable spring clips 15 and 16 are attached to pins 13 and 14.

Figs. 5-7:

A plurality of medals 24-26 are shown supported in a row in laterally abutting positions on the medal mounting device to form a medal assembly 27 in Figs. 5 and 6. Support bar 10 is positioned through looped ribbons 28-30 of medals 24-26. As shown in Fig. 6, ribbons 28 and 30 at opposite ends of the row are respectively tucked between recurved end 11 and support bar 10, and recurved end 12 and support bar 10. Clamping bar 21 is pressed against the back of ribbons 28-30, and its second end 22 tucked under second recurved end 12 of support bar 10 to clamp ribbons 28-30 in position and prevent them from shifting. Medal assembly 27 may be easily attached to a uniform (not shown) by removing spring clips 15 and 16, inserting the pins (not shown) through the uniform, and attached spring clips 15 and 16 back onto the pins from the inside of the uniform.

Medals 24-26 and an additional medal 31 are shown in Fig. 7 supported on the medal mounting device in overlapping positions, wherein each successive ribbon is tucked inside a previous ribbon.

In the example shown, ribbons 28-30 and 32 are provided without the permanent attaching device found on prior art medals, so that they can be attached to the present medal mounting device without interfering with clamping bar 21. The ends of ribbons 38-30 and 32 are glued, sewed, or otherwise attached together.

Figs. 8-11:

In a second embodiment of the medal mounting device shown in Fig. 8, a clamping bar 33 is differently hinged to a recurved first end 34 of a support bar 35. A first end 36 of clamping bar 33 is positioned in front of recurved first end 34 of support bar 35, and has a backwardly bent portion or integral pivot 37 projecting through a hole 38 in recurved first end 34.

In a third embodiment of the medal mounting device shown in Fig. 9, a forwardly bowed clamping bar 39 has a first end 40 integrally attached to a recurved first end 41 of a support bar 42. Although there is no pivot per se, support bar 42 and clamping bar 39 are made of a springy material, such as a soft enough metal, so that a free second end 43 of clamping bar 39 can be moved laterally and tucked under recurved second end 44 of support bar 42. Accordingly, clamping bar 39 is still considered as being hinged to support bar 42 since second end 43 of clamping bar 39 can be moved laterally. Alternatively, clamping bar 39 may be hinged to support bar 42 in other ways.

In a fourth embodiment of the medal mounting device shown in Fig. 10, a forwardly bowed clamping bar 45 is completely separate from a support bar 46. A third pin 47 projects from a back of clamping bar 45 for attaching it to a uniform.

In a fifth embodiment of the medal mounting device shown in Fig. 11, the clamping bar is omitted, and pins 59 are fixedly attached to non-recurved opposite ends of a support bar 60, such as by welding or cementing. Support bar 60 is preferably sized for supporting for a single medal.

Figs. 12-14:

In a sixth embodiment of the mounting device for mounting a single medal 48 shown in Fig. 12, the mounting device is comprised of a T-shaped pin 49 inserted through a ribbon 50 of medal 48. Pin 49 is comprised of a single wire 51 bent to form a "T" shape with horizontal arms 52 and 53, wherein the opposite ends of wire 51 terminate in dual vertical legs 54 and 55. Upper corners 56 and 57 at a top end of ribbon 50 are folded inwardly as shown in Fig. 12, and legs 54 and 55 are inserted through folded corners 56 and 57 from the inside of ribbon 50 and out the opposite side. A lower end 59 of ribbon 50 is inserted through a suspension ring 60 that supports medal 48 and attached to a back side of ribbon 50 to form a small loop 61. To install, ribbon 50 is folded to position pin 49 on its back as shown in Fig. 13, and legs 54 and 55 are inserted in a uniform (not shown).

In a seventh embodiment of the mounting device for mounting a single medal shown in Fig. 14, a ribbon 58 is comprised of a loop with a tapered lower end 62 for supporting the suspension ring of a medal. The opposite ends of the loop are glued or sewn together without any metal fastener, so that it can be used with the present medal mounting device. T-shaped pin 49 is inserted through a back portion of ribbon 58 from inside the loop, so that pin 49 is hidden from view when worn.

SUMMARY AND SCOPE

Although the foregoing description is specific, it should not be considered as a limitation on the scope of the invention, but only as an example of the preferred embodiment. Many variations are

possible within the teachings of the invention. For example, different attachment methods, fasteners, materials, dimensions, etc. can be used unless specifically indicated otherwise. The relative positions of the elements can vary, and the shapes of the elements can vary. The mounting device may be made of any suitable material, such as steel, plastic, etc. Any of the embodiments may be provided with more pins than shown. Therefore, the scope of the invention should be determined by the appended claims and their legal equivalents, not by the examples given.